Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

752P
S
2

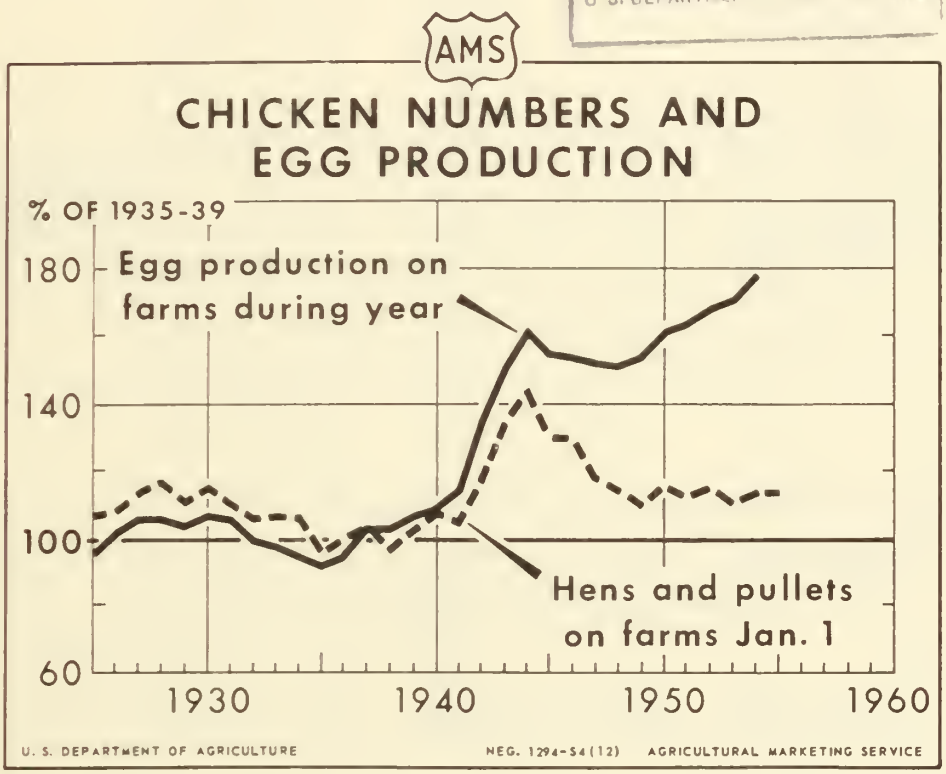
The POULTRY and EGG SITUATION

FOR RELEASE
JAN. 26, P. M.
1955

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS
FEB 21 1955
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In this issue:
Monthly Per Capita
Egg Consumption

PES-175



On account of the higher rate of egg production per hen and pullet, a National laying flock only slightly larger than prewar provides an increased per capita egg supply to an increased population.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

AGRICULTURE - WASHINGTON

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION AT A GLANCE

Item	Unit	Month or date	Average 1943-52	1953	1954	Month or date	Average 1943-52 1/	1953 2/	1954 3/	Comments on current situation
EGGS										
Farm production	Mil. doz.	Nov.	298.6	398.7	421.4	Dec.	342.5	436.6	457.8	Rising seasonally.
Average number of layers on farms	Millions	Nov.	378.6	375.2	387.8	Dec.	394.0	385.5	391.5	
Rate of lay per layer	Eggs	Nov.	9.5	12.8	13.0	Dec.	10.5	13.6	14.0	
Apparent disappearance of shell eggs per civilian 4/	Eggs	Nov.	27.4	30.8	32.4	Dec.	29.5	33.4	34.8	
Frozen egg production	Mil. lb.	Oct.	4.0	6.4	7.8	Nov.	2.8	5.0	5.8	
Dried egg production	Mil. lb.	Oct.	5.7	1.1	0.8	Nov.	4.7	1.3	0.9	
Price received by farmers	Ct.per doz.	Nov.	49.8	49.7	33.9	Dec.	49.2	48.5	32.7	Unfavorable to farmers, and likely to result in smaller replacement of layers from the 1955 hatch.
Price received by farmers as a percentage of parity	Percent	Nov.	89	89	64	Dec.	90	90	63	
Retail price (AMS)	Ct.per doz.	Oct.	69.7	74.7	56.1	Nov.	68.8	68.6	54.6	
Egg-feed price ratio	Lb. feed	Nov.	14.2	13.5	9.0	Dec.	13.8	12.9	8.7	
Stocks:										
Shell	Thous.cases	Dec. 1	7,058	137	325	Jan. 1	2,759	89	183	
Frozen	Mil. lb.	Dec. 1	130.1	61.0	94.7	Jan. 1	96.2	42.0	74.3	
Chicks hatched by commercial hatcheries	Millions	Nov.	54.9	107.5	86.6	Dec.	53.4	116.2	86.3	
Pullets not yet of laying age on farms	Millions	Nov. 1	124.6	80.4	75.7	Dec. 1	70.5	46.0	38.8	
Farm price of poultry ration	Dol.per cwt	Nov.	3.58	3.68	3.78	Dec.	3.62	3.77	3.79	
POULTRY										
Price received by farmers for chickens, live										
Broilers	Ct. per lb.	Nov.	29.5	26.0	20.3	Dec.	29.0	23.2	19.1	Broiler prices rose sharply after mid-December.
Farm chickens	Ct. per lb.	Nov.	23.9	20.8	14.6	Dec.	24.7	21.0	14.7	
All chickens	Ct. per lb.	Nov.	25.7	23.5	17.7	Dec.	26.3	22.5	17.6	
Price received by farmers for all chickens as a percentage of parity	Percent	Nov.	101	7	60	Dec.	101	73	59	
Retail price of broilers and fryers dressed (AMS) 5/	Ct. per lb.	Oct.	51.7	52.4	46.9	Nov.	51.2	52.9	47.4	
Price received by farmers for turkeys, live	Ct. per lb.	Nov.	35.0	33.9	28.8	Dec.	37.1	34.5	29.4	
Stocks:										
Poultry, excluding turkeys	Mil. lb.	Dec. 1	181.5	151.9	144.8	Jan. 1	183.2	153.7	149.6	
Turkeys	Mil. lb.	Dec. 1	90.2	135.2	146.7	Jan. 1	96.9	122.1	123.0	Large consumption at holidays indicated by small margin above last year in storage stocks.
Chicken-feed price ratio	Lb. feed	Nov.	7.3	6.4	4.7	Dec.	7.4	5.9	4.6	
Turkey-feed price ratio	Lb. feed	Nov.	10.2	99.2	7.6	Dec.	10.5	9.2	7.8	
Average weekly placement of chicks in 12 broiler areas	Millions	Nov.	---	13.4	11.5	Dec.	---	13.9	10.8	For 2 weeks in January, average is 11.5.

1/ Except where data are for January, in which cases the averages are for 1944-53. 2/ Except where data are for January in which cases the year is 1954. 3/ Except where data are for January in which cases the year is 1955. 4/ This series has been changed from that appearing in previous issues of the Situation, and now represents only shell eggs. The complete series for 1938 to date appears on page 24. 5/ The 10-year averages in this line are not precisely comparable to the averages for the individual months, because prior to April 1949 this item was reported as "chickens", and since then as "broilers and fryers".

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION

Approved by the Outlook and Situation Board, January 20, 1955

This issue of The Poultry and Egg Situation includes a new series on the monthly civilian per capita disappearance of shell eggs. This new series is intended to serve the same analytical purposes for which the previous monthly per capita disappearance of shell and frozen eggs was used.

SUMMARY

Laying flocks were culled at a faster rate last fall than in past years, and fewer late-hatched pullets were added to flocks. The number of layers on farms on January 1 was only 1 percent above a year earlier compared with an increase of 8 percent on October 1, 1954. Egg production, which on January 1, 1955 was about 4 percent larger than a year earlier, will continue to increase seasonally the next two or three months. However, during the flush period output will be about at 1954 levels, rather than above the year before. Although springtime egg supplies will thus be somewhat smaller than expected earlier, they will nevertheless remain at a high level compared with other recent years.

Egg prices in mid-January averaged about the same as in mid-December, when the price received by farmers was 32.7 cents per dozen compared with 48.5 cents a year earlier. The U. S. average egg-feed price ratio in mid-December was 8.7 (pounds of poultry ration that could be bought with the value of 1 dozen eggs), compared with 12.9 in mid-December 1953, and 13.1 as the December average for 1948-52.

Off-season production of chicks for laying-flock replacement has been considerably lower in the past few months than a year earlier. Hatchery output of replacement chicks this spring is likely also to be lower.

Broiler prices rose sharply in the last few days of December and in early January, when they were 22 to 25 cents in some areas compared with 17 to 20 cents a month earlier. The increase came after a full year of prices generally unsatisfactory to growers.

Although prices to growers were unfavorable for a long period, significant cut-backs in broiler chick placements did not occur until about September or October. After the usual holiday emphasis upon turkey had passed, the smaller broiler supplies were reflected in the markedly higher broiler prices. Based on recent chick placements and settings of eggs in incubators, broiler supplies are likely to continue at the reduced level at least through mid-April.

Reports from principal markets indicate large sales of turkeys in the last 2 months of 1954. The total 1954 crop was 9 percent larger than 1953. Remaining storage stocks on January 1 were only about 1 percent larger than the year earlier. This indicates a markedly higher November-December consumption than in 1953, when prices were higher. However, it was achieved by low prices. At the farm level November and December prices were lower than in any of the 12 preceding years. In mid-December, the U. S. average turkey price received by farmers was 29.4 cents per pound, compared with 34.5 cents a year earlier. Farmers' intentions in early January were to raise 11 percent fewer lightweight turkeys than in 1954, but about the same number of heavy-breed turkeys. Hatchings and testings of breeders to date, however, indicate the possibility of a larger output than is shown by the intentions report, particularly for heavy breeds.

Egg Prices Steady

Although supplies are increasing seasonally, egg prices held about steady in the 2 months ending in mid-January. Production is likely to increase further until March or April. Although hatchery requirements and storage will increase seasonally, supplies available for consumption in February (adjusted for 28 days in month) March and April will exceed that of December and probably that of January. During the flush months of March and April, total production probably will be about the same as a year earlier.

Production of eggs in 1954 was 179.4 million cases, almost 5 percent larger than in 1953. The months showing the largest increases over a year earlier were September, 10 percent; October, 9 percent; and November, 6 percent.

Usually egg production in the fall is lower and prices higher than in other months of the year. In 1954, however, August was the month of lowest production and prices were higher then than in any other month since March, 1954. Farmers' egg prices declined after August and were generally lower in the fall than in the spring. This was the first year on record that prices in the fall were lower than in the spring.

The heavy output of eggs in the fall of 1954 was due to the large number of pullets placed on farms early last spring when prices for eggs were relatively high. Although the number of replacements dropped sharply in late spring when egg prices declined, the reduction did not come early enough nor was it great enough to reduce production last fall below year ago levels.

Unlike many other farm products, almost all of the eggs produced in a year are used in that year. Even when prices are low there is no abandonment of eggs as is the case for some fruits and vegetables, for example. There have been no recent large-scale Government programs for diverting eggs from normal commercial channels. Imports and exports are small. Eggs are not stored for long periods. Thus, changes in domestic consumption closely reflect changes in annual production.

With production increasing steadily in recent years at a rate faster than population increase, egg consumption per person has set successive new records. It apparently has risen high enough--more than one shell egg per person per day--so that the increase in production in 1954 would move into consumption only at substantially lower prices. The record level of consumer disposable income indicates that demand for eggs has been maintained.

Table 1.- Shell eggs: Monthly civilian disappearance, and average retail prices, January 1953 to date

Month	Civilian disappearance				U. S. average retail price per dozen, (AMS)	
	Total		Per capita			
	1953	1954 1/	1953	1954 1/	1953	1954
	Million dozen	Million dozen	Number	Number	Cents	Cents
January	452.7	443.3	34.6	33.3	64.9	65.1
February	402.7	414.8	30.7	31.1	59.8	64.3
March	464.3	473.2	35.4	35.4	63.5	56.7
April	440.6	459.9	33.5	34.3	64.0	53.8
May	430.1	453.9	32.7	33.8	64.0	52.2
June	390.0	402.0	29.6	29.9	65.1	50.9
July	393.0	401.5	29.8	29.9	67.8	54.6
August	374.8	394.1	28.3	29.2	69.9	58.0
September	363.8	393.6	27.5	29.2	73.1	56.0
October	391.7	428.2	29.5	31.7	74.7	56.1
November	409.1	437.7	30.8	32.4	68.6	54.6
December	445.1	471.4	33.4	34.8	66.5	
Total or average	4,957.6	5,173.5	376	385	66.8	

1/ Preliminary.

Table 2.- Eggs: Prices, 1954 with comparisons

Item	1953	1954			1955
	Dec. 15	Jan. 15	Mar. 15	Dec. 15	Jan. 17
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
U. S. average price received by farmers, per dozen:	48.5	46.3	38.7	32.7	
Iowa, prices received by farmers, per dozen 1/:					
Grade A Large	40-42	40-41	33-34	24-26	25 27
Grade A Mediums	34-35	34-36	31-32	18-20	22 23
Current receipts	38-40	37-38	30-32	20-22	24-25
New York, wholesale price, per dozen:					
Midwestern, mixed colors:					
Fancy heavy-weights	51-52	49-50	42-42½	33-33½	33½-34½
Extras 1, mediums	45½-46½	46-47	40½-41	29½-30	32-33
Nearby whites:					
Extra fancy, heavyweights	52-53½	51½-53	44½-45½	36-37½	35-36
Mediums	46-47	48-48½	41-41½	30-30½	34-34½
Small (pullets)	44-45	44-45	---	28-29	28½-29½
Frozen egg, per pound 2/					
Mixed whole egg	39-40½	38-39	30½-33	24½-25½	3/ 25½-27
Yolk, No. 4-5 color	4/ 65-66	61-63	52-55	52-53	3/ 53-54
Albumen	26-29	23-27	21½-22½	14-16½	3/ 15-17
Chicago, wholesale price, per dozen:					
Mixed colors, extras, Large	48-49	46½-47	39-39½	31-31½	32-33
Future contracts:					
September delivery (closing price)	44.50	45.70	44.45	36.95	39.30
San Francisco, wholesale price, per dozen:					
Grade A, Large	60½-61½	54½-55½	42½-43½	40½-41½	43½-44½
Grade A, Mediums	59-59½	53-53½	39-39½	37-37½	42-42½

1/ Friday of given week, "mostly".
2/ Carlots. Average for the week.
3/ Average, week ending January 15.
4/ LCL.

Table 3 .- Eggs: Monthly commercial supply from farm production, and average prices, January 1952 to date 1/

Year and month	Egg production on farms	Net cold storage movements, shell and frozen equivalent		Eggs for hatching 2/	Government purchases for surplus removal 3/	Effective supply in commercial channels (Including U.S. Armed Forces)	U. S. average farm price per dozen	U. S. average retail price (AMS) per dozen
		Out	In					
	1,000 cases	1,000 cases	1,000 cases	1,000 cases	1,000 cases	1,000 cases	Cents	Cents
1952								
January	14,894	270		757		14,407	40.5	59.8
February	15,744		899	1,163		13,682	34.7	55.8
March	17,739		1,270	1,310		15,159	34.0	54.5
April	17,072		1,287	973		14,812	35.2	56.0
May	16,494		1,901	523		14,070	34.2	55.5
June	13,864		707	380		12,777	35.7	56.6
July	12,311	709		310		12,710	43.3	69.2
August	11,461	1,053		317		12,197	48.2	70.5
September	11,336	997		343	125	11,865	48.7	71.9
October	12,139	1,445		350	83	13,151	50.3	74.9
November	12,417	1,201		377	17	13,224	51.9	73.3
December	13,931	819		497	1	14,252	46.6	65.6
1953								
January	15,044	427		673		14,798	45.8	64.9
February	14,733		321	1,097		13,315	42.0	59.8
March	17,422		719	1,263		15,440	44.7	63.5
April	16,856		1,318	1,013		14,525	45.5	64.0
May	16,239		1,480	600		14,159	45.9	64.0
June	13,978		795	427		12,756	45.7	65.1
July	12,844	493		360		12,977	47.7	67.8
August	12,025	876		343		12,558	50.2	69.9
September	11,639	945		387		12,197	51.4	73.1
October	12,778	804		427		13,155	53.2	74.7
November	13,289	822		460		13,651	49.7	68.6
December	14,553	541		547		14,547	48.5	66.5
1954								
January	15,133	112		760		14,485	46.3	65.1
February	15,211		148	1,223		13,840	45.7	64.3
March	18,347		1,614	1,340		15,393	38.7	56.7
April	17,419		1,442	977		15,000	35.0	53.8
May	16,864		1,412	563		14,889	33.1	52.2
June	14,586		790	473		13,323	32.9	50.9
July	13,239	344		393		13,190	34.4	54.6
August	12,625	923		390		13,158	37.4	58.0
September	12,789	770		340		13,219	33.8	56.0
October	13,872	738		340		14,270	32.4	56.1
November	14,047	916		367		14,596	33.9	54.6
December	15,261	671		433			32.7	

1/ Corresponding data for prior months are given in The Poultry and Egg Situation, June 1951, table 5, page 12; Mar.-Apr. 1952, table 1, page 5; Mar. 1954, table 3 , page 6.

2/ Series revised to include eggs used for hatching on farms and allowance for rate of hatchability as stated in article beginning on page 23.

3/ Surplus removal purchases for 1952 entered according to month of scheduled delivery.

Table 4 .- Monthly range of daily closing prices of egg future contracts on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, 1952 and 1953 contracts, and 1954 contracts to date

Range of daily closing prices (per dozen) during the month of:	Contracts by delivery month in which contract is deliverable 1/				
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1952					
October	43.50-45.05	39.00-43.90	38.70-44.35	39.35-44.20	39.00-39.75
November	43.75-44.50		40.30-45.20	40.90-45.05	39.75-42.05B
December	43.50-45.75	43.70A-45.75		37.60-47.55	37.45-43.00
1953					
January	44.75-47.55	44.85-47.60			40.20-46.20
February	46.55-49.65	46.50-49.65			
March	50.35-52.75	49.35-51.75			
April	51.20-54.25	50.20-52.70	49.80-51.30		
May	51.35-53.95	50.25-52.15	48.40-50.15B		
June	51.85-54.20	50.50-52.80	48.65-50.70		
July	51.75-53.85	50.80-52.80	49.15-50.40	46.50-47.60B	
August	52.35-54.10	50.50-52.25	47.45A-49.75	45.10B-47.45	
September	51.65-54.40	50.75-53.80	47.35-51.50	44.00-48.25	41.50-45.00
October	43.85-45.35	48.90-53.60	44.90-51.30	43.70-47.65	42.10-44.25
November	43.25-43.95	43.15-43.50	41.85-43.95	41.05-43.05	39.75-41.40
December	43.55-44.60	43.15-44.40		42.10-47.75	40.15-42.25
1954					
January	44.20-46.70	44.20-46.55			41.75-47.60B
February	46.10-47.55	45.70-47.35			
March	42.60-46.95	42.10-46.50			
April	40.80-43.45	40.40-42.85	39.75-41.25		
May	40.60-42.10	40.05-41.75	39.50-40.60		
June	38.00-41.35	37.95-41.30	37.30-40.25		
July	38.10-42.75	38.00-42.80	37.40-42.35	37.15-41.30	
August	31.05-38.45	32.05-38.95	32.90-38.50	33.25-37.50B	
September	27.00A-30.90	26.20-31.65	27.25-32.45	28.20-33.00	28.20-31.50
October	36.10B-38.65	24.25-27.35	25.30-28.40	25.90-29.30	25.90-29.25
November	37.40-39.00	37.45-38.40	25.65-29.60	26.20-29.65	26.20-28.45
December	36.30-38.75	36.30-38.75		25.45-27.10	25.15-27.80
1955					
January	2/40.00	2/40.20			2/30.70

1/ Gaps between brackets, or in series of numbers, denote change in year of contract.

2/ Closing price as of January 18, 1955.

A - Asked
B - Bid

Table 5.- Demand factors, per capita disappearance, and prices of eggs, poultry, and other commodity groups, annually 1940-53, monthly 1953 to date

Period	Measures of general demand: Total U. S. population 1/	Measures of general demand: Disposable personal income: Total	Measures of general demand: Disposable personal income: Per capita	Deflator of consumer prices 2/	Per capita disappearance: Eggs 3/	Per capita disappearance: Chicken incl. broilers 4/	Per capita disappearance: Turkey 4/	Per capita disappearance: Red meats	Per capita disappearance: Dairy products excl. butter 5/	Per capita disappearance: Flour and cereal products	Retail prices: Eggs, per dozen AMS	Retail prices: Per pound: Frying chickens AMS 6/	Retail prices: Per pound: Red meats 7/	Turkeys, farm price, per pound, (live) 8/	BLS index of consumer prices (1947-49=100): Dairy products	BLS index of consumer prices (1947-49=100): Cereal and bakery products	BLS index of consumer prices (1947-49=100): All foods at retail price
	Mil.	Bil. dol.	Dol.		No.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Qt.	Lb.	Ct.	Ct.	Ct.	Ct.			
1940	132.1	76	576	59.9	314	13.9	2.9	140.4	215	196	30.1		23.8	14.0	52.6	58.6	47.8
1941	133.4	93	697	62.9	307	15.2	2.9	141.6	219	196	36.6		27.9	16.8	58.2	59.2	52.2
1942	134.9	118	871	69.7	314	17.4	3.0	138.4	232	197	45.1		32.4	21.6	65.1	63.6	61.3
1943	136,7	134	977	74.0	342	22.7	2.7	144.9	239	205	53.8		33.2	29.6	69.9	65.1	68.3
1944	138.4	147	1,060	75.2	350	20.1	2.7	152.2	241	188	51.1		31.4	31.6	69.4	65.6	67.4
1945	139.9	150	1,075	76.9	397	21.3	3.4	143.2	258	198	54.6		31.4	33.3	69.5	65.9	68.9
1946	141.4	159	1,126	83.4	374	19.1	3.7	152.1	261	190	55.3		40.0	33.2	85.7	75.6	79.0
1947	144.1	169	1,173	95.5	378	17.9	3.5	153.1	249	171	65.8		57.8	31.9	96.7	94.0	95.9
1948	146.6	188	1,280	102.6	384	18.1	3.0	143.4	241	169	68.4		64.7	41.0	106.3	103.4	104.1
1949	149.2	188	1,261	101.8	378	19.4	3.2	142.6	242	167	65.9	9/51.6	58.7	38.0	96.9	102.7	100.0
1950	151.7	206	1,359	102.8	383	20.3	4.0	142.4	245	166	57.1	50.4	61.5	31.5	95.9	104.5	101.2
1951	154.4	226	1,465	111.0	396	22.2	4.3	135.8	245	166	69.7	52.7	68.5	35.9	107.0	114.0	112.6
1952	157.0	237	1,509	113.5	405	23.1	4.5	144.0	249	163	63.6	52.9	67.6	33.8	111.5	116.8	114.6
1953		250	1,567	114.4	400	23.1	4.4	153.6		159	66.8	53.0	62.5	33.1	109.6	119.1	112.8
Jan.				113.9	34.6				245		64.9	55.6		33.6	111.6	117.7	113.1
Feb.		248	1,561	113.4	30.7			38.5			59.8	53.5	63.0	33.3	110.7	117.6	111.5
Mar.				113.6	35.4						63.5	53.5		33.6	110.3	117.7	111.7
Apr.				113.7	33.5						64.0	53.0		33.3	109.0	118.0	111.5
May		250	1,572	114.0	32.7			36.9			64.0	52.8	62.1	32.5	107.8	118.4	112.1
June				114.5	29.6						65.1	51.4		31.7	107.5	118.9	113.7
July	159.7			114.7	29.8						67.8	52.7		32.3	108.3	119.1	113.8
Aug.		251	1,570	115.0	28.3			37.6			69.9	53.6	62.7	32.7	109.1	119.5	114.1
Sept.				115.2	27.5						73.1	53.3		32.4	109.6	120.3	113.8
Oct.				115.4	29.5						74.7	52.4		33.3	110.1	120.4	113.6
Nov.		251	1,563	115.0	30.8			40.6			68.6	52.9	62.1	33.9	110.5	120.6	112.0
Dec.				114.9	33.4						66.5	51.0		34.5	110.3	120.9	112.3
1954 10/						23.6	4.5	153.7		158				30.2			
Jan.				115.2	33.3						65.1	50.1		33.2	109.7	121.2	113.1
Feb.		252	1,563	115.0	31,1			38.6			64.3	48.7	65.2	33.2	109.0	121.3	112.6
Mar.				114.8	35.4						56.7	48.6		33.1	108.0	121.2	112.1
Apr.				114.6	34.3						53.8	49.5		32.8	104.6	121.1	112.4
May		253	1,560	115.0	33.8			36.6			52.2	48.0	64.9	30.5	103.5	121.3	113.3
June				115.1	29.9						50.9	48.7		30.1	102.9	121.3	113.8
July	162.4			115.2	29.9						54.6	50.3		28.6	104.3	121.6	114.6
Aug.		253	1,555	115.0	29.2			38.0			58.0	51.2	60.2	27.7	105.1	122.3	113.9
Sept.				114.7	29.2						56.0	50.4		27.5	105.8	122.6	112.4
Oct.				114.5	31.7						56.1	46.9		27.1	106.7	122.7	111.8
Nov.				114.6	32.4						54.6	47.4		28.8	106.6	123.1	111.1
Dec.					34.8									29.4			

1/ July 1. Including Armed Forces. Not adjusted for underenumeration. 2/ 1947-49=100. 3/ monthly figures for 1953 and 1954 are for shell eggs only. Annual totals are for eggs in all forms. 4/ Ready-to-cook-basis. 5/ As computed in table 38, page 144, Agricultural Handbook No. 62. 6/ Weighted average of N. Y. dressed and ready-to-cook prices; weights not constant. 7/ Beef, veal, lamb and mutton, and pork excluding lard. Price weighted by consumption of each meat in each year. 8/ Retail price not available. 9/ 9-month average. Prices not available prior to April 1949. 10/ Preliminary.

Seasonally Large Egg Supplies Will Exceed Current Consumption: Significance of Storage

As in every other recent year, egg production in the 4 or 5 months of highest output early this year will exceed current consumption and requirements for hatching. The excess will, as in the past, go to storage for later use. The price which egg breakers and shell egg storers are willing to pay for eggs for storage has a significant bearing upon springtime egg prices.

Monthly egg production will continue to increase seasonally until March or April. But by then output will be little if any higher than year-ago levels, in contrast to early January and other recent months when production was well above a year earlier. This suggests that if total use of eggs for consumption and hatching holds at year-ago levels, the supply of eggs for storage in March, April, and May may be little different from 1954. Although springtime egg supplies will be somewhat smaller than expected earlier, they will be large in comparison with other recent years.

On January 1, egg production was 4 percent above the same date of 1954, the result of a 3 percent increase in rate of lay and a 1 percent increase in the number of layers on hand. Rates of lay in January and February 1954 were lower than expectations based on trend, so 1955 rates for those months may continue to exceed last year. But, in March and for about 3 months following, little change from last year is likely in rate of lay. The number of layers for the next few months is likely to continue quite close to the 1954 numbers.

The price that storers will be willing to pay will be determined, among other things, by the extent of the seasonal egg price rise they anticipate for 1955. In 1954, there was practically no such rise, with the result that the storage of both shell and frozen eggs was unprofitable to those undertaking that venture without hedging. The 1955 prospect will become clearer in late spring, when the extent of laying flock replacement will be better known. The greater the reduction from last year in the number of pullets raised for egg production, the greater will be the prospective egg price rise from spring to the final quarter of 1955. In the unlikely event, however, that the number of chickens raised does not decline, the seasonal rise in prices would be small. This would be reflected to a considerable extent in the price that storers would be willing to pay for eggs in the spring.

In mid-January, egg future contracts for September delivery in Chicago were about 40 cents per dozen. At the same time mixed colors, large extras, a grade commonly stored during the flush season, were quoted at 33 cents. The resulting spread of 6 cents is wider than that which prevailed during most of the into-storage season last year, and is wider than the $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 cents per dozen which is often mentioned as the approximate cost of storing eggs from mid-spring to fall. This indicates considerable optimism in the futures market in Chicago regarding the prospective fall egg price, particularly when considered against the closing prices for corresponding contracts in 1954 (table 4).

Table 6 .- Eggs, shell and frozen: Total cold-storage stocks in 35 principal cities, end of each week during the into-storage season, 1949 to date

Week ending: 1/	Stocks of shell eggs							Stocks of frozen eggs												
								In pounds							In case equivalent					
	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases
Jan. 1:	116	2/56	2/16	2/66	115	50	146	75	30	25	35	29	23	43	2,002	799	647	915	754	585	1,104
8:	104	80	19	74	92	44	165	69	2/29	22	33	26	22	39	1,828	2/786	575	860	685	564	1,006
15:	101	119	23	89	82	37	189	64	31	20	32	24	21	40	1,698	823	515	831	633	548	1,050
22:	100	226	27	123	74	36		58	32	19	31	22	20		1,537	857	485	816	580	525	
29:	93	336	47	175	2/71	32		50	34	18	31	21	20		1,339	917	479	807	539	507	
Feb. 5:	104	447	93	296	88	30		46	37	19	2/31	2/20	20		1,231	976	491	2/798	2/525	517	
12:	120	529	113	435	108	2/28		44	40	2/18	31	21	2/19		1,167	1,060	2/470	813	550	2/494	
19:	122	574	109	561	130	55		41	43	19	33	22	20		1,104	1,146	492	815	583	514	
26:	98	621	115	690	141	77		40	46	19	35	24	21		1,068	1,227	505	916	620	535	
Mar. 5:	2/88	712	110	791	158	106		2/39	52	20	37	26	23		2/1,031	1,374	527	971	668	598	
12:	112	796	121	914	171	150		40	57	23	40	28	27		1,058	1,532	586	1,044	728	710	
19:	183	873	135	1,019	176	203		42	63	25	44	32	32		1,112	1,675	661	1,142	823	839	
26:	246	975	175	1,107	201	255		45	70	30	48	34	38		1,188	1,861	773	1,245	878	991	
Apr. 2:	329	1,096	249	1,189	222	321		48	78	36	51	38	44		1,288	2,068	941	1,329	977	1,142	
9:	394	1,231	337	1,243	277	337		51	82	41	56	41	50		1,367	2,179	1,076	1,451	1,074	1,292	
16:	437	1,397	445	1,345	338	367		55	88	48	61	46	56		1,478	2,339	1,259	1,582	1,192	1,456	
23:	520	1,591	562	1,469	430	428		68	93	54	65	51	62		1,820	2,467	1,414	1,698	1,321	1,603	
30:	589	1,819	686	1,640	527	486		63	97	61	68	55	67		1,670	2,582	1,587	1,779	1,435	1,751	
May 7:	708	2,051	841	1,832	620	602		68	100	68	72	60	73		1,780	2,670	1,755	1,877	1,562	1,889	
14:	883	2,279	1,073	2,039	738	756		70	101	75	76	65	77		1,869	2,703	1,948	1,982	1,692	2,005	
21:	1,063	2,498	1,258	2,226	850	857		75	105	81	81	70	82		2,013	2,790	2,101	2,097	1,818	2,141	
28:	1,236	2,631	1,396	2,333	950	955		81	107	88	85	75	85		2,169	2,845	2,281	2,199	1,936	2,219	
June 4:	1,342	2,718	1,501	2,435	997	1,016		87	110	94	89	79	89		2,329	2,932	2,443	2,309	2,040	2,309	
11:	1,424	2,780	1,565	2,489	1,021	1,120		93	3/112	99	93	81	93		2,489	3/2,991	2,578	2,441	2,112	2,411	
18:	1,506	3/2,808	1,607	3/2,509	1,050	1,162		97	112	104	96	85	97		2,598	2,988	2,696	2,482	2,195	2,525	
25:	1,580	2,785	1,628	2,496	3/1,054	1,202		101	112	106	98	88	100		2,703	2,982	2,743	2,558	2,284	2,609	
July 2:	3/1,622	2,754	3/1,642	2,438	1,047	3/1,219		104	111	109	101	91	104		2,762	2,948	2,836	2,625	2,358	2,698	
9:	1,601	2,656	1,621	2,349	1,033	1,200		104	109	3/110	102	3/91	106		2,769	2,912	3/2,852	2,639	3/2,371	2,741	
16:	1,528	2,559	1,582	2,213	991	1,151		3/105	107	109	3/102	91	3/106		3/2,798	2,852	2,841	3/2,639	2,357	3/2,766	
23:	1,430	2,442	1,545	2,095	935	1,084		103	105	109	100	89	106		2,751	2,804	2,833	2,596	2,305	2,762	
30:	1,363	2,348	1,508	2,027	859	1,031		100	103	107	98	88	106		2,665	2,738	2,775	2,544	2,275	2,762	
Aug. 6:	1,289	2,270	1,457	1,930	802	979		98	101	106	97	86	104		2,604	2,687	2,744	2,513	2,221	2,710	
13:	1,223	2,184	1,356	1,843	718	916		95	99	104	95	84	102		2,534	2,637	2,700	2,465	2,170	2,660	

1/ Dates given are for 1955: entries for the other years are for the corresponding weeks.
2/ Season low of holdings.
3/ Season peak of holdings.

No Egg Solids Bought for School Lunches

On December 31, 1954, the Department of Agriculture announced an intention to buy about 2 million pounds of stabilized dried whole egg solids for distribution through the National School Lunch Program. The Department emphasized that its intended purchase was "to meet the need of the School Lunch Program, and that it is NOT a surplus removal or price support program."

On January 20, it was determined that no purchases would be made under the above announcement, since the quantities offered at acceptable prices were too small to justify a USDA program.

The specifications for stabilized dried whole egg solids are markedly different from the dried egg which the Department bought from 1941 through 1950. "Stabilized" refers to a process (accomplished by either enzymatic action or yeast fermentation) whereby the glucose content of the product is reduced to a point where the stability of the powder in storage is greatly enhanced. Additional factors contributing to greater palatability of the product at time of use are the lowered moisture content, and the packaging in small hermetically-sealed cans in an atmosphere of inert gases.

Culling Accelerated in Recent Months

Culling of the laying flock, and of potential layers, was evidently heavier percentagewise in the last 4 or 5 months of 1954 than in comparable months of previous years. The influence of low egg prices upon culling evidently more than offset the low price for the culled birds. On October 1, 1954, the potential layers on farms were 108 percent of a year earlier, but on January 1, 1955 they were only 101 percent of last year, as shown below:

Table 7.- Numbers of birds, as a percentage of previous year, 1950-54

Item	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Potential layers on farms, 1/ as a percentage of previous year					
(a) Aug. 1	98	103	98	101	103
(b) Sept. 1	97	103	95	100	104
(c) Oct. 1	97	103	94	101	104
(d) Nov. 1	97	103	95	101	103
(e) Dec. 1	96	103	96	102	100
Layers as a percentage of previous year					
(a) Oct. 1	103	100	101	100	108
(b) Nov. 1	101	101	99	101	105
(c) Dec. 1	99	101	99	101	102
(d) Jan. 1 following	97	102	98	102	101

1/ Hens, laying pullets, and pullets not yet laying.

Table 8.- Hens and pullets on farms, comparisons at selected dates, 1950 to date

Item	Unit	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954 1/
Pullets on farms						
(a) Oct. 1, laying and not laying	Mil.	301.3	320.7	293.0	312.3	325.5
(b) Jan. 1 following, laying	Mil.	233.7	244.3	230.0	255.1	
(c) (b) as a percentage of (a)	Pct.	78	76	78	82	
Hens on farms						
(a) Oct. 1	Mil.	191.6	185.8	185.3	170.6	175.9
(b) Jan. 1 following	Mil.	146.3	143.7	149.5	132.2	
(c) (b) as a percentage of (a)	Pct.	76	77	81	77	
Hens as a percentage of Jan. 1 pullets						
(a) Oct. 1	Pct.	67	70	67	67	62
(b) Jan. 1 following	Pct.	51	54	54	52	

1/ Detailed data for January 1, 1955, ("Jan. 1 following 1954") to become available February 14.

The above table 8 includes comparisons among numbers of layers and potential layers at various dates in recent years, which give a better indication of culling rates than month-to-month changes in numbers of layers. In table 7 it is significant to note that for 1954 the percentage figures for layers are several points lower than the corresponding percentage figures for the potential layers from which the layers presumably were derived. This indicates more rapid culling than in the preceding year.

A further indication of the extent of recent culling will become available on February 14, with release of USDA's annual report, "Livestock and Poultry on Farms and Ranches, January 1." This report will show numbers of hens and pullets separately. Table 8 is intended as a background for the forthcoming release, by which its data can be compared with trends over previous years.

Replacement Chicks Fewer in Off-Season Hatch

Some decline in number of chicks raised for laying flock replacement is expected in view of the unfavorable egg-feed price ratio in recent months. The USDA Crop Report as of February 1, to be released February 10, will include a report of farmers' intentions to raise chickens for 1955 laying flock replacement.

Hatching for flock replacement in October-December, the off-season, is down sharply from a year ago. This is indicated by subtracting broiler placements, adjusted to allow for non-reporting broiler areas, from total hatchery output for those months.

From California, where hatchery output in 1953 and 1954 was reported with a breed-type breakdown, the following was reported (for light breeds and light crossbreeds only, the types most likely to be exclusively for egg production):

Table 9.- Eggs set and chicks hatched, California, for selected dates 1953-55

Week ending	Eggs set		Chicks hatched	
	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
1954-55 dates				
Oct. 2	842	783	579	632
9	867	762	546	611
16	967	714	577	587
23	977	782	579	530
30	915	748	584	517
Nov. 6	895	637	619	527
13	1,026	856	668	559
20	1,075	835	648	545
27	1,114	974	602	463
Dec. 4	886	659	728	620
11	1,141	1,089	761	617
18	1,538	1,365	787	713
25	1,511	1,254	655	496
Jan. 1	1,536	1,242	880	836
8	1,713	1,240	1,182	976

During the principal hatching months of 1955, the monthly USDA reports of chick production may include a breakdown similar to that which permitted the above compilation for California.

Shorter Supplies, End of Holidays, Raise Broiler Prices

Broiler prices in most areas rose sharply in the last few days of 1954, and in the first week of January 1955. In December, prices were the lowest in 12 months. Factors in the rise were the declining supply of broilers, and the increase in demand after the end of the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays when turkey was the favored item of poultry.

Table 10.- Chicks: Production, presumed distribution between broilers and other purposes, monthly for September through December, 1953 and 1954

Month	Production of chicks in commercial hatcheries (1)	Broiler placements: Reported in specialized areas 1/ (2)	Broiler placements: Computed total 2/ (3)	Difference: column (1) minus column (3) 3/ (4)
	Million	Million	Million	
1953				
September	87	44	79	8
October	98	49	88	10
November	107	55	98	9
December	116	58	104	12
4-month total	408	206	369	39
1954				
September	99	61	98	1
October	86	55	89	-3
November	87	55	89	-2
December	86	53	85	1
4-month total	358	224	361	-3

1/ 1953, 11 specialized areas; 1954, 14 areas.

2/ Placements in the specialized areas in the preceding column were presumed to be 56 percent of the total broiler placements in 1953, and 62 percent in 1954.

3/ Without allowance for variations in chicks destroyed, in number for nonfarm (backyard) rearing, or farm-hatched chicks. The minus entries in recent months should not be taken literally, but they do indicate the sharp reduction from year-ago in the number of off-season replacement chicks.

Broiler chick placements from December 1953 through July were record high and prices for the broilers raised from these chicks were much lower than a year earlier. Despite the gradual reductions in placements in August and September, prices for birds marketed from those broods did not rise. Growers of broilers from the October hatch, marketed after Christmas, were the first to benefit from increased prices.

The volume of monthly marketings for February through about April will be approximately the same as that of January. Placements from October to date have been at about an even level. Settings of eggs in incubators to date suggest that placements will not change much in the weeks when those eggs will hatch.

Table 11.- Broiler prices, selected data, with comparisons

Description and location	Weight or class	1954 Nov. 15	1954 Dec. 15	1954 Dec. 28	1955 Jan. 17
		Ct.	Ct.	Ct.	Ct.
Prices received by farmers:					
U. S. average (mid-month)		20.3	19.1		
Del-Mar-Va.	2½-3½ lbs.	19-19-3/4	18-18½	21	29-30
North Georgia	2½-3½ lbs.	18	15½-16	17½-19	25
NW. Ark., Arkansas	2½-3¼ lbs.	20	17	20	24-25
East Texas	2½-3 lbs.	20	18	20	24
California 1/	Fryers	23-25	20-23	19-21	25-28
Wholesale prices:					
Iced, ready-to-cook					
Chicago	1-3/4-3½ lbs.	33-33½	29½-30	28½-29	41
San Francisco	2½-4½ lbs.	47-49½	41½-48½	41½-47½	49-52½
New York dressed, New York	3 lbs.	24-26	24-26	25½-27½	34-35½

1/ San Joaquin Valley.

Table 12.- Broilers: Placements in specialized areas and U. S. average mid-month price received by farmers with cost of broiler mash and resulting broiler-feed price ratio

Month	Average weekly rate of broiler placements in specialized areas 1/			U. S. mid-month averages: Price received by farmers for broilers, per pound		Price paid by farmers for broiler mash, per cwt.		Broiler-feed price ratio	
	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954
	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Ct.	Ct.	Dol.	Dol.	Lb.	Lb.
January	10	12	11	28.2	24.6	5.46	5.23	5.2	4.7
February	11	14	12	27.9	22.6	5.38	5.26	5.2	4.3
March	12	14	11	28.2	23.4	5.34	5.32	5.3	4.4
April	13	14		28.1	24.5	5.32	5.41	5.3	4.5
May	13	15		27.2	23.5	5.28	5.51	5.2	4.3
June	15	15		26.2	24.2	5.26	5.39	5.0	4.5
July	15	16		28.2	25.4	5.23	5.35	5.4	4.7
August	14	15		28.0	24.8	5.23	5.39	5.4	4.6
September	14	15		27.4	23.3	5.22	5.33	5.2	4.4
October	12	14		27.0	20.9	5.14	5.19	5.2	4.0
November	11	13		26.2	20.3	5.09	5.17	5.1	3.9
December	11	13		23.4	19.1	5.23	5.18	4.5	3.7
Annual average	13	14		27.0	23.0	5.26	5.31	5.2	4.3

1/ Placements 3 months earlier, approximately resulting in marketings in given month. Entries for January-March 1953 are 11 areas; otherwise, 13 areas.

Broiler producers may increase production as a result of the increased prices of early January. For some weeks, however, the supply will be governed by birds already growing or eggs already in incubators.

Broiler chick placements were at record levels the first 9 months of 1954, even though prices were relatively low the entire period. Placements dropped below a year earlier in October and the present level of output is probably one-fourth below the high in June 1954. However, even when broilers were being produced in record quantity, the industry capacity was not fully utilized. The unused capacity can readily be restored to operation if growers judge resumed operation to be justified by the price outlook.

Turkeys: Preparations for 1955 Crop

Turkey prices during the Christmas season were near the low level established at Thanksgiving. Storage holdings, at 123 million pounds on January 1, 1955, were only 1 percent more than a year before while the crop was 9 percent larger than in 1953. This indicates that consumption during the last quarter of 1954 must have been of record proportions, but it occurred only at sharply lower prices than last year at both the farm and consumer level.

Prices received by farmers averaged 28.8 cents in November and 29.4 cents in December compared with 33.9 and 34.5 cents in the same months of 1953. Retail prices are not systematically reported, but available data suggest an equivalent decline at that level. Toms declined more from last year than hens.

Table 13.- Intentions to raise turkeys, 1955; turkeys raised and breed distribution, 1951-1954, by regions

Item	Unit	Region						United States
		N. Atl.	E. N. Cent.	W. N. Cent.	S. Atl.	S. Cent.	West.	
Intentions to raise turkeys, 1955								
(a) Heavy breeds	Percentage of 1954	94	99	114	86	97	96	100
(b) Light breeds		84	101	79	91	97	92	89
(c) All breeds		91	100	103	88	97	95	96
Turkeys raised in:								
1954 1/	Million	5.0	8.0	15.9	10.6	5.6	16.0	61.0
1953	Million	4.8	7.3	13.2	9.7	5.6	15.7	56.2
1952	Million	5.3	7.1	12.9	11.6	6.1	17.8	60.9
Light-breed turkeys as percentage of total raised								
1955 (intentions)	Percent	28.6	30.4	24.8	52.6	23.5	13.7	27.3
1954 1/	Percent	31.0	30.0	32.3	51.3	23.5	14.2	29.6
1953	Percent	26.6	31.1	27.6	54.7	19.9	13.0	27.8
1952	Percent	27.3	18.8	18.1	47.6	15.5	17.0	29.0

1/ Preliminary.

Farmers' intentions for 1955, as of early January, were to grow about the same number of heavy-breed turkeys as in 1954, and 11 percent fewer Beltsvilles and other small breeds. In terms of numbers of birds, these changes average to a 4 percent decrease.

In the past, unfavorable returns to growers from one year's turkey crop have often been reflected in a smaller crop the next year (table 17). Available data by which these intentions might be confirmed concern the testing of turkey breeders by official State agencies, and actual hatchings to date. These data do to a limited extent support the stated intentions for 1955. At this early date, the report of testings is probably more meaningful than the report of actual hatchings. Later in the season the reverse will be true. [A further indication of the 1955 turkey crop will be given in the report of turkey breeders on farms January 1 (as a part of total livestock on farms).]

Reported testings of heavy-breed turkeys from July 1, 1954 until January 1, 1955 were 4 percent above a year earlier. Testings in the last 2 months of this period were slightly below the year before, while those earlier in the season were considerably higher. In the preceding season, 77 percent of the heavy-breed testings were accomplished before January 1.

On account of progress in methods of producing turkey hatching eggs and poults, there has been a trend toward a greater number of turkeys raised per breeder turkey. If this trend continues and if total heavy-breed testings are the same size as last year, production of poults would be greater than in 1954.

Monthly testings of heavy-breed turkeys in August, September, and October, 1954, were 20 thousand or more above a year earlier in each month. If these increases are reflected in increased numbers of early poults and increased slaughter of turkeys about mid-summer, the profit outlook for turkey producers will be adversely affected.

Among light weight turkeys, current-season testings cumulative to January 1, 1955 were 23 percent below the year before. Testings of these turkeys normally spread out more over the season than do heavy-breed testings. Last season the total by January 1 was 61 percent of the 12-month total. Because these turkeys find a more ready year-round market than the larger ones, their seasonal distribution is not so serious a consideration as it is among large turkeys.

In recent months, the increase in turkey hatchings over a year earlier has been large on a percentage basis, especially for heavy-breed poults. However, hatchings in this period last year were seasonally small. From September 1 through December heavy-breed hatchings increased 75 percent or 0.3 million poults above a year earlier, while light breeds increased 38 percent or 1.1 million birds. This was equivalent to 2 percent of the turkeys raised in 1954.

Table 14.- Turkeys raised, and intentions to raise turkeys, by regions, 1938 to date

Year	Turkeys raised: Number	Turkeys raised: Percentage of previous year 1/	Intentions to raise turkeys as a percentage of previous year	Turkeys raised: Number	Turkeys raised: Percentage of previous year 1/	Intentions to raise turkeys as a percentage of previous year	Turkeys raised: Number	Turkeys raised: Percentage of previous year 1/	Intentions to raise turkeys as a percentage of previous year
	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.
	North Atlantic			East North Central			West North Central		
1938	1.6	108	111	2.2	106	116	8.5	117	106
1939	1.9	123	130	2.6	119	127	11.4	134	131
1940	1.9	101	106	2.9	109	111	11.7	102	105
1941	2.1	106	102	2.7	94	97	11.2	96	97
1942	2.3	110	107	2.9	108	106	10.4	92	108
1943	2.3	102	119	2.9	100	114	9.0	87	111
1944	2.7	117	108	3.6	123	115	9.8	109	102
1945	3.6	134	120	4.6	131	120	11.8	120	110
1946	3.5	97	100	4.7	100	100	11.9	101	97
1947	3.3	95	90	4.3	93	90	9.6	81	84
1948	3.3	99	83	4.0	92	81	7.7	80	69
1949	3.6	110	113	4.8	121	122	10.1	131	136
1950	3.9	108	106	5.4	111	110	11.1	110	105
1951	4.3	110	108	6.0	113	101	12.3	111	100
1952	5.3	124	107	7.1	118	112	12.9	105	105
1953	4.8	89	91	7.3	102	100	13.2	103	103
1954 2/	5.0	106	105	8.0	110	105	15.9	120	113
1955			91			100			103
	South Atlantic			South Central			Western		
1938	2.0	93	100	6.2	94	105	6.4	104	99
1939	2.1	109	121	6.9	112	124	8.6	133	123
1940	2.2	102	100	6.6	95	111	8.5	100	97
1941	2.2	99	99	5.6	85	95	8.9	104	96
1942	2.4	110	116	5.4	97	109	9.2	104	107
1943	2.3	97	110	4.9	91	104	10.4	113	117
1944	2.6	114	103	4.7	96	99	11.7	113	99
1945	3.3	126	113	5.4	113	96	14.2	121	106
1946	3.5	105	105	4.8	90	105	11.8	83	82
1947	3.1	90	88	4.0	83	93	9.6	81	74
1948	3.4	108	93	3.3	83	90	9.9	103	89
1949	4.6	137	126	4.3	132	119	13.8	139	123
1950	5.5	120	115	4.7	110	91	13.2	96	92
1951	8.1	146	108	5.4	115	101	16.3	124	95
1952	11.6	143	131	6.1	113	104	17.8	109	112
1953	9.7	84	84	5.6	91	91	15.7	88	85
1954 2/	10.6	110	106	5.6	101	103	16.0	102	105
1955			88			97			95

1/ Computed from unrounded figures.

2/ Preliminary.

Table 15.- Turkeys tested for pullorum by official State agencies

Month	Heavy breeds			Light breeds			Total		
	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
				(a) During the month					
July	6	13	30	26	38	79	32	51	109
August	44	22	48	18	57	68	62	79	116
September	87	100	124	64	95	68	151	195	191
October	364	353	377	57	112	49	420	464	426
November	671	591	570	51	90	24	721	682	594
December	635	638	634	73	72	72	708	710	707
January	297	326		86	71		383	398	
February	109	144		58	82		167	226	
March	31	35		12	44		43	80	
April	6	4		17	11		23	15	
May	1/	4		6	19		6	23	
June	1	8		25	67		26	75	
				(b) Cumulative					
July	6	13	30	26	38	79	32	51	109
August	50	35	78	44	95	147	94	130	225
September	137	135	202	108	191	214	245	326	417
October	501	488	580	165	302	263	665	790	843
November	1,171	1,079	1,149	215	393	288	1,387	1,472	1,437
December	1,807	1,717	1,784	288	465	360	2,095	2,182	2,143
January	2,104	2,043		374	536		2,478	2,579	
February	2,214	2,187		432	618		2,645	2,805	
March	2,245	2,223		444	662		2,689	2,885	
April	2,250	2,227		461	673		2,711	2,900	
May	2,250	2,231		467	692		2,717	2,923	
June	2,252	2,239		492	759		2,743	2,998	

1/ Less than .5 thousand.

Table 16.- Turkeys: Poults hatched by commercial hatcheries

Month	Heavy breeds			Light breeds			Total		
	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
				(a) During the month					
July		1,150	1,370		1,804	2,420		2,954	3,790
August		123	85		1,103	1,311		1,226	1,396
September		11	27		442	646		453	673
October		25	60		408	651		433	711
November		65	150		671	1,023		736	1,173
December		345	545		1,306	1,593		1,651	2,138
January	858	1,212		968	1,838		1,826	3,050	
February	2,819	3,170		1,201	1,676		4,020	4,846	
March	8,776	9,205		1,667	1,750		10,443	10,955	
April	12,762	13,711		2,270	2,332		15,032	16,043	
May	12,669	12,799		2,964	3,208		15,633	16,007	
June	6,321	7,431		2,649	2,870		8,970	10,301	
				(b) Cumulative					
July		1,150	1,370		1,804	2,420		2,954	3,790
August		1,273	1,455		2,907	3,731		4,180	5,186
September		1,284	1,482		3,349	4,377		4,633	5,859
October		1,309	1,542		3,757	5,028		5,066	6,570
November		1,374	1,692		4,428	6,051		5,802	7,743
December		1,719	2,237		5,734	7,644		7,453	9,881
January	858	2,931		968	7,572		1,826	10,503	
February	3,677	6,101		2,169	9,248		5,846	15,349	
March	12,453	15,306		3,836	10,998		16,289	26,304	
April	25,215	29,017		6,106	13,330		31,321	42,347	
May	37,884	41,816		9,070	16,538		46,954	58,354	
June	44,205	49,247		11,719	19,408		55,924	68,655	

Table 17.– Turkeys raised and related data; available data, 1930 to date

Year	Absolute numbers			Change from preceding year						
				Number			Percent			
	Turkeys raised	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1	Turkeys raised 2/	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1 2/	Turkeys raised 2/	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Farmers' intentions to raise turkeys	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1 2/
	Millions	Pounds	Millions	Millions	Pounds	Millions	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
1930	17	11.2		-1	-1.9		-6	-15		
1931	18	10.7		1	-0.5		5	-4		
1932	22	14.6		4	3.9		22	36		
1933	23	11.7		1	-2.9		4	-20		
1934	22	8.0		-2	-3.7		-7	-32		
1935	21	7.6		-1	-.4		-4	-5		
1936	28	12.2		7	4.6		34	61		
1937	26	6.6	3.5	-2	-5.6		-8	-46		
1938	27	10.7	3.2	1	4.1	-0.3	4	62	6	-7
1939	34	12.5	3.9	7	1.8	.7	25	17	27	21
1940	34	9.4	4.6	3/	-3.1	.7	1	-25	5	18
1941	33	9.4	3.8	-1	0	-.8	-4	0	-3	-16
1942	33	10.1	4.0	3/	.7	.1	3/	7	8	3
1943	32	12.4	3.9	-1	2.3	-.1	-2	23	12	-2
1944	35	11.3	4.2	3	-1.1	.3	10	-9	2	8
1945	43	11.8	4.5	8	.5	.3	22	4	8	7
1946	40	11.1	4.8	-3	-.7	.3	-6	-6	-5	7
1947	34	10.2	3.8	-6	-.9	-1.1	-15	-8	-16	-22
1948	32	7.7	2.5	-2	-2.5	-1.2	-7	-25	-18	-33
1949	41	13.1	3.1	10	5.4	.6	31	70	25	24
1950	44	10.2	3.3	3	-2.9	.1	6	-22	1	4
1951	52	9.0	3.3	9	-1.2	4/	20	-12	1	1
1952	61	9.2	3.8	8	.2	.5	16	2	11	16
1953	56	8.2	3.4	-5	-1.0	-.5	-8	-11	-8	-12
1954 5/	61	9.1	3.4	5	.9	4/	9	11	7	3/
1955									-4	

1/ Weighted average of monthly ratios as follows: 1930-44, preceding October, 1; preceding November, 4; preceding December, 4; January, 1. 1945 to date, preceding October, 2; preceding November, 4; preceding December, 3; January, 1. 2/ Computed from unrounded data. 3/ Change smaller than 0.5. 4/ Less than 0.05. 5/ Preliminary.

Table 18.- Chicken numbers and egg production, United States, 1925-55

(Data for cover chart)

Year	Hens and pullets on farms, January 1	Egg production on farms during the year	Hens and pullets as a percentage of 1935-39	Egg production as a percentage of 1935-39
	Millions	Millions	Percent	Percent
1925	390,517	34,969	107	96
1926	393,849	37,248	108	102
1927	414,875	38,627	114	106
1928	427,139	38,659	117	106
1929	403,774	37,921	111	104
1930	420,451	39,067	115	107
1931	401,776	38,532	110	106
1932	385,826	36,298	106	100
1933	390,743	35,514	107	98
1934	385,341	34,429	106	95
1935	350,407	33,609	96	92
1936	362,619	34,534	100	95
1937	379,754	37,564	104	103
1938	352,964	37,356	97	103
1939	376,141	38,843	103	107
1940	392,655	39,707	108	109
1941	381,315	41,894	105	115
1942	427,911	48,610	117	134
1943	488,959	54,547	134	150
1944	523,587	58,537	144	161
1945	473,880	56,221	130	155
1946	472,820	55,962	130	154
1947	431,446	55,384	118	152
1948	417,570	54,899	115	151
1949	399,380	56,154	110	154
1950	423,773	58,734	116	161
1951	410,200	59,265	113	163
1952	419,861	60,985	115	168
1953	403,960	61,704	111	170
1954	413,653	64,582	114	178
1955	415,529		114	

A MONTHLY SERIES OF CIVILIAN PER CAPITA SHELL EGG CONSUMPTION

by

Martin J. Gerra 1/

During the 45 years for which disappearance data for eggs are available, civilian per capita domestic disappearance of shell eggs and the shell egg equivalent of processed eggs has increased about 43 percent.

Within each year, however, the swing in egg consumption is much more pronounced than revealed by the annual changes in consumption because the seasonality of egg production is only partially compensated for by seasonal changes in offsetting factors such as storage or the requirements for eggs for hatching. In the last ten years production in September, October, and November has averaged 37 percent smaller than in the peak months of March through May, although in 1954 the range was only 22 percent. This contrasts with an average year-to-year change in annual production of only 2 percent. Egg prices exhibit a similar movement--larger variation within years than between years.

In seeking to determine factors that influence the short-run demand for and price of eggs, emphasis should be placed on the use of monthly data. Considerable price data are available on a monthly basis, but the lack of a sufficiently detailed and reliable consumption series has hindered successful short-term egg price analysis. To meet this need, monthly data on consumption for the period 1938 to date, presented in table 19, were developed.

These figures replace the estimates of apparent civilian per capita disappearance of eggs, formerly published in each issue of this Situation, which did not separate shell from frozen eggs. Because processed eggs (liquid, frozen, dried) represent a relatively small share of total egg consumption, and because the nature of the demand for them is much different than for shell eggs, they are excluded from the monthly estimates. Sufficient monthly information was not available to permit the series to be computed for years prior to 1938.

1/ Based on research under authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA. Title II).

Table 19.- Eggs: Civilian per capita disappearance, shell by months and processed by years, 1938 to date

Year	Shell														
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total 1/	Processed 2/	Total
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1938	21.0	23.2	29.0	29.5	29.1	25.6	25.7	23.9	22.2	21.0	19.2	19.5	289	17	306
1939	21.2	23.2	28.9	28.6	27.3	25.4	25.8	24.0	22.5	22.0	20.5	21.1	291	18	309
1940	21.0	22.9	29.8	28.3	28.7	26.6	26.2	25.0	23.5	22.9	21.0	20.9	296	18	314
1941 3/	23.1	24.4	28.9	28.1	26.9	25.5	24.4	25.9	22.7	22.4	21.3	21.8	296	11	307
1942 3/	23.6	22.7	28.3	27.1	28.9	25.4	25.9	25.0	23.7	24.0	22.6	24.5	302	12	314
1943	25.7	25.0	30.6	27.4	28.5	26.6	27.4	27.9	25.4	26.1	25.2	27.1	323	19	342
1944	29.3	25.6	28.8	29.2	4/	27.7	28.2	27.4	28.0	26.4	24.3	26.4	322	28	350
1945	29.8	30.2	36.3	33.4	34.9	32.9	32.6	31.4	28.2	29.1	26.5	26.8	374	23	397
1946	31.4	28.5	33.5	31.9	31.8	28.0	28.9	28.0	28.6	28.0	26.6	29.2	254	20	374
1947	31.2	28.7	35.0	33.2	31.5	29.3	29.4	27.3	26.0	27.0	26.3	28.6	353	25	378
1948	30.0	30.5	34.6	31.9	30.7	28.5	28.5	27.9	27.2	28.5	28.0	29.7	356	28	384
1949	31.8	30.3	32.5	31.9	31.3	28.1	28.4	26.5	25.8	27.2	28.3	30.7	353	25	378
1950	32.9	29.3	32.9	32.3	30.0	28.2	28.9	27.7	27.4	29.6	28.5	30.5	358	25	383
1951	32.7	31.4	34.8	32.8	31.3	30.2	29.9	28.3	27.1	29.1	29.5	31.5	369	27	396
1952	33.7	32.0	35.9	35.0	33.5	29.9	29.9	28.0	27.1	30.1	30.4	33.4	379	26	405
1953	34.6	30.7	35.4	33.5	32.7	29.6	29.8	28.3	27.5	29.5	30.8	33.4	376	24	400
1954 5/	33.3	31.1	35.4	34.3	33.8	29.9	29.9	29.2	29.2	31.7	32.4	34.8	385	27	412

1/ Monthly totals do not necessarily add to yearly figures due to rounding.

2/ Liquid, frozen and dried eggs (egg solids) converted to a shell egg equivalent.

3/ Civilian per capita disappearance is slightly understated because some shell egg purchases by U.S.D.A. were subsequently processed into frozen or dried egg and diverted from shell supply.

4/ This entry computes out to 20 eggs, which probably is a considerable understatement of the actual disappearance.

5/ Preliminary.

Table 20 illustrates for the year 1954 the series used to construct the monthly supply and distribution table for shell eggs. Farm and nonfarm egg production is supplemented by imports, reduced by the quantity of eggs used for hatching and for liquid egg production, and adjusted by the change in first-of-month commercial cold-storage stocks. The result is an estimate of total disappearance. That estimate is then reduced by the monthly quantity of shell eggs shipped to United States territories and possessions through commercial channels, and exported. The estimate is further reduced by the quantity involved in military procurement and in Department of Agriculture purchases. The estimate, however, may in turn be supplemented by the amount of shell eggs which the Department releases back to civilian use through schools, institutions, and welfare groups. The resulting figure gives the apparent total civilian consumption of shell eggs. Dividing that total by monthly population estimates places the data on a per capita basis.

Sources of Data

Farm egg production for each month is reported about the 10th of the following month by the Crop Reporting Board in Crop Production. To allow for the quantity of eggs produced by back-yard flocks not on farms, reported farm production is increased by 10 percent each year.

Cold-storage holdings of shell eggs on the last day of each month are avilable in the Cold Storage Report of the Agricultural Marketing Service, and are accepted as indicating stocks for the first day of the following month. Holdings by the Department of Agriculture are excluded from stock statistics when working up the supply and distribution balance because Government purchases are considered as removed from commercial consumption channels at time of delivery to the Government.

Eggs are used by commercial hatcheries and farms for hatching chicks. Information on the eggs used by commercial hatcheries is not available directly, but monthly estimates were based on the number of chicks hatched by commercial hatcheries, adjusted for the rate of hatchability. This allowed for eggs that failed to hatch, assuming that each month's hatch was based on eggs placed in incubators during the previous month. Hatchability was estimated as 69 percent in 1949 and 60 percent in 1925. Hatchability in the intervening and subsequent years was assumed to follow a straight line trend. No adjustment was made for variation in monthly hatchability rates because sufficiently detailed data are not available. The relative accuracy of these estimates for recent years was appraised by checking the ratio of chicks hatched to eggs set three weeks earlier in a broiler area for which detailed hatchery records had been summarized. Eggs used for hatching on farms were added to the hatchery data to obtain total hatching use. Only an annual farm figure is reported but hatching on farms is probably concentrated in the months of March through June. Accordingly, the annual farm total was distributed in the same ratio as commercial hatchery use in each of

Table 20.- Shell eggs: Estimated civilian per capita disappearance, by months 1954; sample computation

Date	Beginning stocks	Stock change 1/	Farm production	Farm and nonfarm production	Eggs used for hatching	Liquid egg production 2/	Imports	Total disappearance	Commercial exports	Shipments	Military procurement	U.S.D.A.		Civilian disappearance	Population eating out of civilian supplies	Per capita disappearance
												Purchases	Distribution to school lunch, etc.			
	1,000 cases	Mil. doz.	Mil.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil.	No.
1954 3/																
Jan.	67	-0.4	5,448	499.4	22.8	23.4	1.5	455.1	2.0	1.0	8.8	---	---	443.3	159.9	33.3
Feb.	54	1.0	5,476	502.0	36.7	37.2	.3	427.4	1.5	1.0	10.1	---	---	414.8	160.3	31.1
Mar.	89	8.8	6,605	605.5	(40.2)	72.4	.2	484.3	1.8	.9	8.4	---	---	473.2	160.5	35.4
Apr.	382	8.0	6,271	574.8	(29.3)	66.2	.1	471.4	1.9	1.1	8.5	---	---	459.9	160.7	34.3
May	649	17.2	6,071	556.5	(16.9)	56.5	.1	466.0	2.2	1.1	8.8	---	---	453.9	161.0	33.8
June	1,224	8.8	5,251	481.3	(14.2)	43.9	.1	414.5	2.9	.9	8.7	---	---	402.0	161.2	29.9
July	1,517	-4.9	4,766	436.9	11.8	19.3	.1	410.8	4.6	.8	3.9	---	---	401.5	161.3	29.9
Aug.	1,354	-11.4	4,545	416.6	11.7	9.6	.1	406.8	4.3	1.2	7.2	---	---	394.1	161.7	29.2
Sept.	975	-5.2	4,604	422.0	10.2	7.6	.1	409.5	6.3	1.1	8.5	---	---	393.6	161.8	29.2
Oct.	803	-5.6	4,994	457.8	10.2	8.9	.2	444.5	7.9	(1.1)	7.3	---	---	428.2	162.0	31.7
Nov.	615	-8.9	5,057	463.6	(11.0)	6.7	(.2)	455.0	(7.9)	(1.1)	8.3	---	---	437.7	162.2	32.4
Dec.	318	-4.6	5,494	503.6	(13.0)	(6.7)	(.2)	488.7	(7.9)	(1.1)	(8.3)	---	---	471.4	162.4	34.8
Year 4/	67	2.9	64,582	5,920.0	228.0	358.4	3.2	5,333.9	51.2	12.4	96.8	---	---	5,173.5	161.3	384.9

1/ Minus sign indicates a reduction in stocks; plus sign an increase in stocks.
2/ Shell egg equivalent of liquid, frozen, and dried egg production.
3/ Preliminary. Figures in parenthesis are estimates.
4/ Monthly totals do not necessarily add to yearly figures due to rounding.

the four months--March through June--was to the total 4-month commercial use. Table 21 illustrates this computational procedure for 1953 (final data are not yet available for 1954). The number of chicks hatched in commercial hatcheries is reported in the monthly Commercial Hatchery Report. Eggs used for farm hatching are included in the annual Farm Production, Disposition, Cash Receipts and Gross Income release. Both are Agricultural Marketing Service publications.

Because we are concerned with estimating civilian consumption of shell eggs, the quantity of eggs used in commercial egg breaking and egg drying plants is subtracted from farm and nonfarm production. That quantity is derived by converting total liquid egg production for each month (reported monthly by AMS in Egg Products-Liquid, Frozen and Dried Egg [Egg Solids] Production) to a shell egg equivalent. The factor used was 37.5 pounds of liquid egg obtained per case of shell eggs broken prior to January 1, 1951 and 38.5 pounds for subsequent breaking stock.

Imports, exports, and shipments to and from U. S. Territories and possessions are reported by the Bureau of the Census in their monthly trade publications. 2/ Territories represented are Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands and, beginning with 1946, our possessions at Guam, American Samoa, Wake, Midway, and the Canton and Enderbury Islands. For the period 1938-42, monthly shipment data are not available. For Alaska and Hawaii, the annual totals for those years were distributed according to the average monthly distribution pattern that prevailed in the years 1943-47, while the average for the period 1944-48 was used to adjust shipments to Puerto Rico. The annual data for shipments to the Virgin Islands were apportioned equally among months because the number of eggs shipped was so small. Shell egg shipments from our Territories, if any, are not separately reported. Since April 1948, shippers to Alaska and Hawaii have not been required to file trade declarations and an estimate of monthly shipments to them is used in the supply and distribution table.

Deliveries of shell eggs to the Department of Agriculture were compiled from records of the Commodity Credit Corporation and other USDA agencies. Eggs obtained under USDA programs are removed from commercial channels except for those quantities which go to the school lunch program, institutions, and welfare groups. The bulk of school lunch deliveries of shell eggs took place prior to 1946 and monthly records are no longer available. As a result, for the period 1941-45, reported fiscal year data were adjusted to an estimated calendar year basis and then allocated equally among months. Current information on Department transactions is released in special announcements.

2/ United States Imports of Merchandise for Consumption (FT 110), United States Exports of Domestic and Foreign Merchandise (FT 410), and United States Trade In Merchandise and Gold and Silver with U. S. Territories and Possessions (FT 800).

Table 21.- Method for estimating number of eggs used for hatching, monthly, 1953

Month	Chicks hatched in commercial hatcheries, following month	Eggs set in commercial hatcheries, given month 1/	Eggs used for farm hatching 2/	Total eggs used for hatching	
				Eggs	Dozens
	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand
January	170,191	242,437		242,437	20,203
February	276,985	394,566		394,566	32,880
March	287,468	409,499	46,343	455,842	37,987
April	229,817	327,375	37,026	364,401	30,367
May	136,638	194,641	22,022	216,663	18,055
June	96,783	137,868	15,609	153,477	12,790
July	91,014	129,650		129,650	10,805
August	86,895	123,782		123,782	10,315
September	97,944	139,521		139,521	11,627
October	107,456	153,071		153,071	12,756
November	116,198	165,524		165,524	13,794
December	138,469	197,249		197,249	16,437
Year 3/	1,835,858	2,615,182	121,000	2,736,182	228,015

1/ Assuming that eggs set in given month are the basis for chicks hatched in following month, and assuming hatchability according to trend (for 1953, 70.2 percent of eggs set).

2/ Annual total apportioned among four months in same proportion as commercial chick production was distributed among those four months.

3/ Monthly totals do not necessarily add to yearly figures due to rounding.

Military procurement of shell eggs, including quantities obtained for civilian feeding abroad, were obtained from monthly Army and Navy purchase reports compiled specifically for the Department of Agriculture.

Estimates of the population eating out of civilian supplies, adjusted for underenumeration of all age groups in decennial censuses, are made by AMS, based on Bureau of the Census population estimates, for January, February, May, July, August, and November. Data for the intervening months were obtained by interpolation. The adjusted population series was used to make the consumption data comparable with those published on a quarterly basis in the National Food Situation.

Preliminary Monthly Estimates

Because of the time lag that exists in reporting several of the series used in estimating shell egg disappearance, the figures published for current months are only preliminary estimates. However, because data for the two major categories, production and stocks, are available by the mid-month following, these preliminary estimates serve satisfactorily. Liquid egg production is reported about the last week of the succeeding month while the greater part of the data necessary to develop the number of eggs used for hatching lags 2 months. The procedure used for these two categories was to adjust the last data available by the corresponding change from the preceding year. A final estimate of eggs used for hatching cannot be made until about April of the year following when the quantity of eggs used for hatching on farms is reported. Because it takes several months before statistics are available for imports, exports and shipments, and military and Department of Agriculture transactions, which are relatively small in the total supply and distribution, the latest information available was projected forward unchanged. Month to month changes in population statistics were based on a trend increment of 0.2 million persons per month. Because of the lag in reporting information, a revised consumption series for each year will be published the following May.

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington 25, D. C.

Penalty for private use to avoid payment of postage $300

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

AMS-PES-175-1/55

NOTICE

If you no longer need this publication, check here ☐ return this sheet, and your name will be dropped from the mailing list.

If your address should be changed, write the new address on this sheet and return the whole sheet to:
Agricultural Marketing Service,
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington 25, D. C.